

# abbey

MAGAZINE

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on the road to a  
*greener*  
future



**Steve Granite**  
Chief Executive  
Abbey Logistics Group

## Dear Colleagues

Happy New Year! I hope you all enjoyed a break with family and friends over the festive period and are refreshed and ready for a successful 2019.

We start 2019 on a positive note as the new Hovis contract commenced successfully, with Abbey taking over distribution of 185,000 tonnes of flour from Hovis Wellingborough to Hovis bakeries across the UK.

I am pleased to say that the transition from the incumbent haulier, who held the contract for 23 years, went extremely well, which is credit to the implementation team and the transferring staff.

The Hovis contract will take our expected annual turnover to levels of £70m per year, which will allow us to focus on consolidating the business in 2019, improving performance in some areas and driving up profitability. The Tarmac and Hovis contracts resulted in 35 new tractor units and 45 tankers being added to the fleet, requiring investment of circa £5m, which is further evidence of Northedge's support for Abbey.

Prior to Christmas, I met with a number of North-West-based drivers to start discussing areas of focus and we've been working to address the points raised since returning to work in January. The meeting was extremely useful and we're keen to resolve the points as quickly as possible.



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The business is currently undergoing some changes to the leadership team as we build a team of people from the logistics sector who will help take the business 'back to basics' and address some of the areas that require improvement.

Our previous Chief Financial Officer and Finance Director are leaving the business and are being replaced by a new Finance Director, Matthew Male, who joins from Eddie Stobart Logistics. Our former Finance Controller Paul Jamieson resumes his old position to support Matthew in leading the Finance team.

Previous Chairman Ian Kelly has been replaced by Julian Maturi who owned/led the Palletways business for 15 years and joins Abbey this month. Julian is a down-to-earth Chairman who is very much aligned to our 'back to basics' approach for 2019.

Finally, Neil Simms (Operations Director) will finish full-time employment with Abbey at the end of this month but will remain working on projects part-time. Neil's role will be split into two, creating a 'Business Unit Director' role for Liquids and another for the Bulk Powder division. The purpose is to ensure the director running each division has the bandwidth to manage and lead effectively, as the role was becoming too big for one person.

These changes are all about bringing in experienced people from our sector who can help us move back to basics and re-engage with the people who make our business happen on the ground.

I am confident as we move into 2019 that it will be a year of action and progress!

One final note; the Board of Directors and I would like to wish you and your family a Happy New Year and I hope this year will be a brilliant one for you! 🍀

Steve.

# Hovis awards Abbey bulk flour distribution contract



Baking company Hovis has awarded Abbey a UK contract to provide bulk flour distribution to its bakeries in the Midlands and the South.

Hovis, one of the country's most recognised brands, selected Abbey Logistics following a competitive tender process, where Abbey demonstrated the added value it could provide through its flexible and responsive distribution model, ability to invest in new equipment and its focus on data-driven continuous improvement.

As part of the contract, Abbey will invest significantly in new equipment to bolster Hovis' existing fleet and will support Hovis with flexible resource from the wider nationwide bulk powder tanker fleet. All bulk distribution staff currently

supporting Hovis in the Midlands and the South will also transfer to Abbey Logistics when the contract begins.

Steve Granite, Abbey Logistics CEO, said:

"We are delighted that Hovis selected us to deliver this prestigious contract and look forward to providing the company with a dynamic and flexible service that enhances its quality of service.

"Our two companies are very closely aligned in terms of our commitment to quality and continuous improvement, and this new partnership once

again demonstrates Abbey's commitment to investment in equipment that supports our customers."

Chris Harrop, Hovis Milling Supply Chain Director, said: "We needed a transport provider with expertise, experience and the ability to drive supply chain service to ensure that Hovis can in turn deliver to our customers and consumers.

"Abbey also demonstrated its commitment to us through its fleet investment and we were impressed by the company's ability to capture and analyse real-time data, which will deliver increased operational flexibility."

# Abbey begins plastics repackaging service

As one of the UK's largest powder road tanker companies, Abbey works very closely with customers to understand their requirements and build solutions designed to improve the efficiency of their supply chains.

Earlier this year we were asked to design and build a reformatting facility to transfer bulk bags of plastic granules into bulk tankers. If successful, the new process would eliminate a stage in our customer's supply chain, reduce mileage and reduce reliance on a third party.

Abbey's Warehouse Manager John Abbott began the process of identifying the requirements and designing a process with the necessary equipment in a separate area at Abbey's warehouse facilities in Bromborough on the Wirral.

The new facility needed to adhere to Abbey's strict health and safety requirements

and, due to the nature of the product, Abbey had to ensure zero spills and waste, and strict contamination controls.

In October, the first bags arrived at Bromborough and John's team started testing the new equipment, which included a new forklift truck strong enough to lift the one-tonne bags of plastic pellets, new specially designed forklift attachments, and stainless-steel hoppers, which allow us to easily and safely load our tankers.

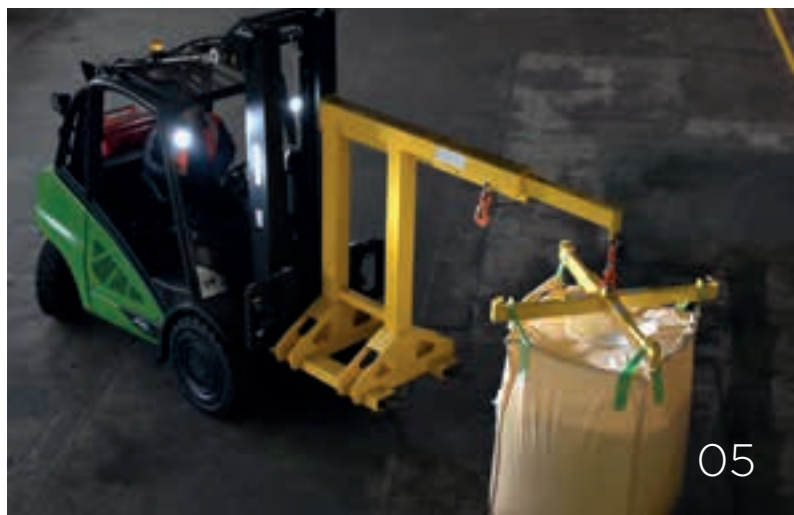
Once the process for filling the tankers was successfully signed off, the new operation launched, loading more than 100 tonnes of plastic granules in the first week.

John Abbott, Abbey Logistics Warehouse Manager, said:

"Our big-bag discharge system enables us to offer our customers more choice in delivering bulk powders across the UK and Europe.

"By transferring bagged product to bulk tankers, we can provide customers with the flexibility to source or manufacture dry bulk products in bags, whilst being able to deliver in bulk road tankers.

"With cleaning facilities on site, we can now offer this service for a wide range of powder products manufactured in bags with a requirement to be distributed in bulk road tankers."





# Dedicated animal feed tanker division launches

Abbey has launched a new dedicated animal feed tanker division, focused on providing nationwide bulk transport and logistics for liquid animal feed.

Abbey are no strangers to the animal feed sector and have provided road tanker transport for some of Europe's leading manufacturers for more than 20 years. This latest move has enabled the company to dedicate vehicles and tankers to the animal feed sector and crucially, puts in place a dedicated support team consisting of planning and commercial functions that will concentrate solely on customers in this sector.

As one of the UK's leading bulk liquid tanker companies, Abbey has a transport and depot network in place throughout the UK that supports its key contracts with volume fluctuation and seasonal demand variance. This expertise has proved highly effective in serving existing liquid

animal feed customers and the creation of a dedicated division was a natural progression.

Abbey's ability to provide extensive and tailored management information, forecasting, dynamic ETA updates and live tracking, combined with our modern and reliable fleet, has been met positively by our customers and the company is now looking to establish these added value services and high standards in the animal feed sector, where we believe there is a strong appetite for providing more value to customers than just A to B transport.

Sophie Lucy, Abbey Logistics' Animal Feed Commercial Manager, said: "Our new division signals Abbey's intent and commitment to customers in the animal feed sector, which we hope to develop over the coming years.

"We know from the feedback we get from customers in other sectors how much value is placed on having a dedicated planning resource, customer service contact and tailored management information, and we are now replicating this with our animal feed customers. The benefits our customers can expect include greater visibility of their products, increased transport reliability and the capacity to strategically plan and forecast.

"The planning team we have put in place has significant experience in the sector and its unique characteristics, and we have selected drivers with considerable experience in liquid animal feed, so although this is a new division, we are already well established in this sector and we hope that by focusing our efforts we can develop and grow with existing customers as well as reaching new clients looking for more value from their transport provider.

"The current animal feed transport market is relatively regionalised and our aim is to offer customers a nationwide solution thanks to the existing Abbey infrastructure, which will provide our customers with a more robust national supply chain." 





## Abbey lead drivers and driver trainers complete Fleet Instructor training

LGV training shouldn't stop when a driver gets their licence. Further training throughout a driver's career is essential to ensure that the skills learned before they took their test stay up-to-date, and complacency and bad habits don't creep in.

That's why Abbey's lead drivers and driver trainers recently completed an intensive and in-depth LGV Fleet Instructor course run by the highly regarded RTITB.


The RTITB sets industry-leading training standards specifically designed to change behaviour and make measurable improvements to efficiency, risk and safety.

Having completed the course, our trained LGV Fleet Instructors are qualified to

share their skills, knowledge and experience to assess, mentor and instruct other experienced LGV drivers at Abbey. This helps us reduce the risks our business faces and keeps the safety of our drivers, staff and the general public at the forefront of our minds when we are out on the road.

The LGV Fleet Instructor course is different from many other LGV driver courses because it focuses on training qualified and experienced LGV drivers rather than people new to the

role. By training our lead drivers and instructors, we hope that this additional knowledge and new skills will filter through our wider driver teams and maintain the high standards needed to be competitive in our markets.

Abbey drivers who completed the course are now eligible to register on the RTITB Register of Professional Instructors; they are: Tim Eastwood, Paul Wright, Nick Dodd, Michael Babenko, Scott Higham, Phil Taylor, Paul Stanley, John Leyland and Jamie Pryor. 




# New Mercedes Actros trucks join the Abbey fleet

Abbey welcomes 28 new Mercedes Actros trucks that joined the fleet in December. The trucks will work primarily on our Scotland-based contracts.

The Actros has been the flagship model in the product range of Mercedes-Benz Trucks since its market launch in 1996, and remains so more than 20 years on.

The latest models in Abbey's fleet feature Mercedes' second-generation 12.8-litre, straight-six engines, offering fuel savings of around 3% compared to their already industry-leading predecessors. To further boost economy, they are equipped with Predictive Powertrain Control systems and Mercedes claims the cab design was the result of over 2,600 hours of aerodynamic fine-tuning in the wind tunnel.

All trucks will be fitted with Microlise telematics to ensure our drivers are getting the maximum performance and economy from the vehicles.

The trucks will be working on long-haul routes which means driver comfort is of critical importance. The new cabs have microwaves and fridges fitted as standard and offer a large amount of space - both for living and storage, laid out in a way that is very usable. Standing space is also very practical thanks to the cab's flat floor which provides 1.97m, a first in a 2,300mm-wide package. 





# More warehouse space for Bromborough


With an increasing number of orders for value-added services such as liquid food drumming and bag-to-bulk handling in our warehouse division, Abbey has increased warehouse space to satisfy demand for ambient storage.

We've added 30,000 sq. feet of space to our site at Bromborough, an increase of 25% that will provide enough space for up to 3,300 pallets.

The new warehouse is fitted with a docking bay, which considerably speeds up the loading and unloading of containers by our team of forklift-truck drivers.

John Abbott, Abbey's Operations Manager, said: "With increasing demand for our bag-to-bulk handling and liquid food drumming services;

more space for ambient storage was required to keep pace with what our customers needed.

"The two materials-handling services fulfil a requirement that our customers have been looking for, which enables them to reduce the complexity of their supply chains by having Abbey manage both handling and transport. In addition, thanks to our position close to Liverpool port, we are able to reduce the distance our customers need to transport their products for reformatting." 





## Abbey approved to deliver in-house driver CPC course



Supporting Abbey's ongoing commitment to road safety and improving driving standards, Abbey's in-house driver CPC course has been approved by the Joint Approvals Unit For Periodic Training (JAUPT), the not-for-profit organisation responsible for ensuring the quality and content of driver CPC courses.

Previously, Abbey's driver trainers delivered external courses that fulfilled driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) commitments. This accreditation enables us to now deliver our own courses tailored specifically to our drivers.

Abbey's courses are designed to fulfil the needs of our business and focus on the key areas that impact our drivers in real-world situations. The courses are practical and cover both on-road instruction and classroom

training. Key aspects of the course include safe driving, urban driving, driving style and techniques, use of the engine and gearbox, and environmental considerations.

Matthew Parry, Abbey Logistics Senior Driver Trainer, said:

"This accreditation is the outcome of working closely with our colleagues in the driver team to understand the challenges they face, and then many hours optimising the way in which we deliver the training

to be memorable, effective and engaging.

"Our focus has been to deliver the most effective training course we can and not just simply to meet the demands of driver CPC legislation. We believe the drivers who attend our course will take away new skills and be able to apply those in real-world situations, further raising the standards of our already highly skilled driver team."

# Abbey welcomes two new apprentices

Abbey Logistics is pleased to welcome Josh Farrell and Liam Murray to the team. The new recruits have joined Abbey's apprenticeship scheme, which looks to support young people local to Abbey's main planning depot in Liverpool.

The new apprentices both joined Abbey from All Saints High School in Kirkby, Merseyside following a presentation on the company and the logistics industry by Abbey CEO, Steve Granite and Head of Liquid Transport, Paul Laverick. Granite is the founder of industry initiative 'Think Logistics' which now boasts more than 40 logistics companies as active members and works across the UK delivering presentations and workshops to schools and colleges, highlighting the opportunities available in the industry and demonstrating there's more to the sector than just trucks and sheds. Think Logistics member companies also provide internships and work experience to school-leavers looking for an insight into the world of work and, potentially, a career in logistics.

Following the presentation, attendees were invited to apply to join Abbey's apprentice scheme and Josh and Liam were selected following a challenging interview process. Both new recruits are now based at Abbey's busy Liverpool planning and operations depot, where Josh has started as an apprentice traffic officer and Liam has

joined us as an apprentice fleet administrator. The two key operational roles are ideal for the apprentices to get a complete overview of how a modern logistics company functions, how we maintain our fleet, and how we keep it running smoothly 24/7.

Throughout their apprenticeships, Josh and Liam will follow a structured programme with support and guidance from Abbey senior management and theory-based learning from an external trainer.

Steve Granite, said: "Apprentice schemes, internships and work experience placements are vital to successfully plug the skills gaps we face in our industry. Logistics is an exciting and challenging sector and it is our responsibility as employers to create opportunities for young people to gain the experience and skills necessary to begin their careers.

"Abbey Logistics has a proven track record of successful apprenticeship programmes, and provides the opportunity to earn while you learn and gain real hands-on work experience without the debt of going to university.



Josh Farrell and Abbey CEO Steve Granite



Liam Murray and Abbey CEO Steve Granite

"Some of Abbey's most senior and experienced people started their careers as apprentices, including me, so we are delighted to provide opportunities to motivated people and help them begin their careers in the logistics sector." 



# 11 SAFETY TIPS FOR DRIVING IN WINTER

At this time of year it is always worth remembering the essentials before setting out on a journey in unpredictable or extreme weather.

WINTER WEATHER  
HIGH RISK OF  
DISRUPTION

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

### Dress Warmly

- Wear comfortable, warm clothes
- Keep extra clothes in your cab/car in case you get stuck or stranded

### Eat Well

- Eat frequently to keep your energy levels up
- Keep extra food in your cab/car in case you are stuck or stranded

### Rest

Always stop in a safe or designated area; take regular breaks

### Medication

Avoid medication that may make you drowsy or affect your ability to drive safely

## TAKE CARE ON THE ROAD

### Safe Distances

Under normal circumstances you should keep four seconds' distance behind the vehicle in front of you. In extreme weather conditions you need to at least triple this distance, lower your speed and leave extra room to stop.

### Speed

- Speed limits are for ideal conditions; GO SLOWER in adverse conditions
- When going down a hill engage lower gears to utilise engine braking

### Braking

- Cold and wet conditions can cause brakes to be weak, apply unevenly or grab. This causes a lack of braking power, wheel lock-ups, pulling to one side and, potentially, jack-knifing
- Brake gently to avoid skidding if wheels lock, and ease off all brakes

### Visibility

- If visibility is reduced, reduce your speed
- Travel with your lights on
- Keep lights, reflective tape and windscreen clean

# TAKE CARE OF YOUR VEHICLE

Before you set off, ensure your vehicle is free from ice and snow

## Tyres

- Tyre pressures can drop 1 psi for every 10-degree drop in temperature
- Check your tread: stopping distances increase dramatically with worn tyres

## Fuel

- Make sure you have plenty of fuel so you can keep your engine running to stay warm if you get stuck, and make sure you don't get stranded if caught in lengthy delays

# DRIVER'S SURVIVAL KIT

Keep the following in your vehicle

- Extra blankets
- Extra clothes, gloves, shoes, jackets
- Non-perishable food and drink
- Torch and batteries
- First aid kit
- Phone charger
- Ice scraper
- De-icer
- Extra windscreen washer fluid
- Shovel

# BE PREPARED!





## National Safety Committee launches

The safety of everybody at Abbey is a responsibility the company takes very seriously. Our strengthened SHEQ team has implemented several new safety-focused initiatives over the last twelve months and will continue to look for ways the company can improve standards across the business.


As many of our employees work away from Abbey's own sites, our Safety, Health, Environment and Quality (SHEQ) team does not always have visibility of the risks and challenges that our teams can face. For this reason, Abbey has set up a number of systems such as the Airswab near-miss reporting app to enable colleagues to report safety issues remotely.

While Airswab provides a tool for reporting anything unsafe, there is no substitute for face-to-face communication with people who are working on our own and customers' sites, and in our workshops and wash bays.

For this reason, the SHEQ team has established the National Safety Committee, which meets quarterly to provide an open forum for those working in these areas to speak directly to Group CEO Steve Granite, Head of SHEQ Grant Davies, and several other senior managers responsible for key areas of the business.

Driver representatives from each depot attend to put forward any concerns or suggestions, as well as colleagues from our wash bays and workshops. Minutes are taken at the meetings, meaning that all points are recorded, and actions are assigned to those responsible for that

area of the business. These minutes are reviewed in the following meeting to ensure that action was taken.

If you have any safety concerns that you'd like to be discussed, please speak with your lead driver who will raise the issue at the next Safety Committee meeting. 

# Macmillan Coffee Morning

In September, the good people at Abbey's head office in Golborne, as well as colleagues in our Middlewich depot, put on their aprons and got baking to raise money for the amazing charity Macmillan Cancer Support.



Every year Macmillan hold the World's Biggest Coffee Morning, and the day is one of Macmillan's biggest fundraising events for people and families facing cancer. The event is a great way for people all over the UK to get together and host, attend and donate at their own

coffee mornings to show their support for Macmillan Cancer Support and the fantastic work they do.

At Abbey, the event was organised by HR Support Manager Sally McGann at our Golborne office and Administration Supervisor Jo

Hall at Middlewich.

Colleagues at each office enjoyed coffee and cakes brought in by staff and even a curry and cheese board at Middlewich. Many thanks to everyone who contributed and all those who worked hard to make the event a success. 🍪

## We Are The Champions!

Congratulations to Abbey's 5-a-side football team for bringing home the Airsweb Cup.

Airsweb, the Environmental, Health and Safety software specialists, hold an annual football tournament with competing teams made up of their customers and suppliers.

This popular event supports Airsweb's corporate charity, which is Halton Haven Hospice, an independent charity that provides palliative care within Halton and surrounding areas.

The tournament itself was a hard-fought event with Abbey battling it out against teams from across the transport sector.

Well done to Abbey's IT Analyst Dominic Clarke, who organised Abbey's team, Operations Manager John Abbott and Payroll Manager Kingsley Sheppard for supporting this event and winning every game in what is fast becoming one of the most competitive competitions in the industry!



➡ Far left, John Abbott; 3rd from right, Dominic Clarke; 2nd from left, Kingsley Sheppard

If you have a story for the Abbey Magazine, please send details to [michael.fox@abbeylogisticsgroup.com](mailto:michael.fox@abbeylogisticsgroup.com)



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